

# Humility and Success

by Beverly Carradine

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and devotion to God in order to stand the test of success and avoid the dangers of spiritual fall.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 16:18, Matthew 23:12, Philippians 2:3, James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6

**Topics:** "Humility", "Spiritual Pride"

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## Description

Beverly Carradine preaches about Elijah passing the test of success by remaining humble and true before God even after a great victory on Mount Carmel. He warns that not everyone can stand the test of success, as many fall under the weight of public praise and compliments, leading to the loss of humility and spiritual pride. Those who become victims of success end up worshiping themselves, with Christ taking a backseat in their lives. Carradine emphasizes the importance of staying faithful and humble, like Elijah, even in times of elevation and promotion.

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## Transcript

Elijah Passed the Test of Success - The prophet had won a great victory on Mount Carmel. The fire had fallen, he had been vindicated and honored by God, the people were convinced, and the prophets of Baal had been slain by the hundreds. Through all this amazing success he kept in his proper place before God. He was humble and true as ever and went from this triumph to another on the brow of the mountain, where he pleaded with the Lord and received rain for the parched country. He stood the test of success. Not all can stand the test of success. Many have gone down under it, and many more will yet do so. Some Christians lose their heads immediately upon a first clearly marked success. Others run well for a while, and then, as victory after victory comes to them on different lines of the Christian life, they begin to falter, totter, and then topple from their high attainments and close walk with God. They went up the ladder of temporal promotion too rapidly. The elevation was so sudden, and the position so lofty, as to create dizziness.

### The Loss of Humility

Frequent success in the work of the Lord brought about public praise, newspaper notices, various kinds of compliments, which at last sapped the strength, stole away the humility, and destroyed the power of one of God's devoted servants. The harm was not all done at once, but spiritual people could see the damage being inflicted, and beheld it with intense sorrow. The man once so humble, developed spiritual pride before he was aware of it. He can no longer endure contradiction. He finds it difficult to pardon a criticism

passed on himself or work. He has a keen relish for praise; it is like incense in his nostrils. He does not care to hear others complimented; it is wearisome to him. He wants the censer swung before him mainly, if not altogether. Time was that newspaper notices humbled him, but now he carefully cuts them out or sends marked copies of the paper to individuals or to others' papers, that the echo of his greatness might dwell long in the land.

#### The Victim of Success

He is a spiritually fallen man. He has an idol in his life, and it is himself. He is a self-worshipper. He says that it is not so, but it is evident to all that Christ has really the second place in his life. He was once great in his littleness, but he is now little in his greatness. The trouble is that he does not realize it. God knows it; men see it, but he, the fallen one, is the last to recognize it. God, in His goodness, will yet show His servant these melancholy things. The pillow of the Satan-deceived and fame-deluded man will yet be wet with bitter tears over the fact that he could not stand success. He was faithful enough in a humble and obscure sphere, but lost his head completely when elevation and promotion came.

#### Who Can Stand Success

All are willing to risk it, and thousands who enter upon that condition get spiritually hurt, and, worse still, go into backsliding, and some into gross sin. We never hear a young preacher much praised, but we tremble for him. No one can tell the harm that has been done here by indiscreet Christian men and women. It is true that the flattered, patted, and petted man of God says that he needs all this kind of word-incense and tongue-anointings; but a glance at the spiritual giants of the Bible - Joseph, Elijah, Daniel, and Paul - shows that they had none of this coddling and nursing, taffying and sugar-plumming. Few can stand it. Few can be trusted on pinnacles. Few can wield the scepter of any kind of power without making a bludgeon of it to others and finally a tripping-stick for himself. Under the strange, intoxicating influence of public notice, public applause, and the dizziness of high position, behold, the simplicity and sincerity of Christ is lost. The humble man grows haughty, the once lowly child of God becomes domineering, and the meek, obscure preacher in time evolves into a dreaded ecclesiastical tyrant and autocrat. Few can stand success and power. Some, thank God, like Elijah, can do so; may their tribe increase. But many can not; down they go. Look at them tottering already! See them falling! Hear the crash! My God, have mercy!

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